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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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COUNTRY Austria (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. (19 March 1948)

SUBJECT Communist Werkschutz Forces Held
in Readiness at Neusiedl a/d Zaya

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1. Werkschutz (factory guard) forces are garrisoned at Neusiedl a/d Zaya. These forces were recently increased by 80 members of the Neusiedl fire brigade.
the strength of this Werkschutz was 580 men. As of the same date, recruits were arriving from Gmünd, Aalfang near Gmünd, Carinthia, and Styria at a rate of about 40 per day.
Comment: In this connection, the role which was played by fire brigade units in the 1934 revolt will be recalled.)
2. This Werkschutz was until recently under the command of one Hiebl or Hiebler who was a Schutzbund commander in 1934 of the Reintal district. After February 1934, he fled to Russia where he was trained and indoctrinated. The Werkschutz is now under the command of a Soviet major; Hiebl is acting as political advisor. The Werkschutz command post is also at Neusiedl a/d Zaya. Members of the Werkschutz receive a salary of 500 to 800 schillings monthly. They are equipped with revolvers, carbines, Bren guns, and machine guns. Explosives are reported to be stored at the command post.
3. On 13 March, workers in Zistersdorf were told they must be ready for a trip to Vienna. Thirty trucks with a load capacity of 70 men each, as well as 100 smaller vehicles belonging to the oil companies, are kept in readiness. Workers were told to be prepared to leave on one hour's notice. (Werkschutz forces are armed factory guards under Soviet orders in USIA plants and Zistersdorf. The Ministry of Interior estimates their strength at 10 thousand to 12 thousand.)
Comment: USFA lowers this figure to a rough estimate of a possible 4000.)
4. It is feared that the Zistersdorf area may become a base for armed bands for small-scale guerrilla type activity, in the event of the conclusion of a State Treaty and the withdrawal of occupation troops.
the Austrian Communists are not strong, he states they could easily be reinforced by an influx of Communists from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, etc.

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